



**United States Attorney's Office
District of Columbia**

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NEWS RELEASE

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**District man pleads guilty in connection with
two sexual assaults of women he met through Craigslist
- Attacks Took Place in Hotel Rooms -**

WASHINGTON - A 26-year-old District of Columbia man pleaded guilty today in connection with two sexual assaults of women he met through Craigslist, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced. Brandon B. Petty entered guilty pleas to one count each of assault with intent to commit first degree sexual abuse and attempted first degree sexual abuse while armed before the Honorable Lynn Leibovitz in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

According to the government's evidence, the first incident took place Sept. 8, 2009, at the Marriott Courtyard Hotel north of Dupont Circle. Petty contacted the victim through an ad she was running for adult services on Craigslist. After making arrangements to meet, he arrived at her hotel room shortly after 7 that evening. Inside the room, he grabbed the victim by the hair, placed a knife to her neck and demanded money. He then forced the victim to the floor and told her to perform oral sex. The incident was interrupted by the victim's friend, who began to bang at the door from the hallway. As a result, Petty fled from the room. The victim and her friend spotted him a short time later near Dupont Circle and called 9-1-1. When the defendant heard the police sirens, he ran. He was apprehended by officers of the Metropolitan Police Department after a short chase.

The second incident occurred on April 21, 2010, at the Hilton Washington Hotel, also north of Dupont Circle. Petty contacted another victim -- also through an ad she was running for adult services on Craigslist. After making arrangements to meet, he arrived at her hotel room shortly after 3 p.m. that day. Inside the room, he grabbed the victim by the hair, placed a knife to her neck and demanded money. He then forced the victim to the floor and forced her perform oral sex. Afterward the defendant fled from the room. Later that day, after reporting the incident to hotel security and the Metropolitan Police Department, the victim positively identified the defendant from a series of photographs shown to her by the police. A subsequent examination of DNA evidence and cellular phone records, as well as surveillance video from the hotel, all helped to link Petty to the crime.

Petty faces a maximum term of imprisonment of 15 years for assault with intent to

commit first degree sexual abuse and a maximum term of 30 years for attempted first degree sexual abuse while armed. However, under the District of Columbia's Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines, he will likely receive a sentence of between three years and six and a half years for assault with intent to commit first degree sexual abuse and between six years and ten years for attempted first degree sexual abuse while armed. He will be required under District of Columbia law to register for life as a sex offender. Sentencing is scheduled for Sept. 28, 2010.

In announcing the guilty verdict, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the outstanding work of Detectives Derek Bolding, Karen Zibrat, Randy Brooks, Jose Solloso and Lenard Jenkins, of the Metropolitan Police Department's (MPD) Sexual Assault Unit. The U.S. Attorney also acknowledged the of the following additional MPD personnel: Officers Daniel Baez, John Muniz, Susan Mayer, Kimberly Metivier, Israel Coles and S.P. Amoden; Sergeants John McDonald and Lennox Antoine; Evidence Technicians James Holder, George Klein, Tina Ramadhan, Valerie Campbell and William Hyatt; DNA Examiner Jennifer Zeffer of the MPD Crime Lab; and Detectives Steven Schwalm and Jonathan Andrews.

Machen also praised the outstanding assistance that was provided by other law enforcement partners, including: Avon Jackson, Peter Amico, Richard Kelly, and Michael Picou of the U.S. Marshals Service; agents from the FBI's Washington Field Office, and Department of Justice Investigator Theresa Segovia. He also recognized the efforts of various staff of the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Investigators Durand Odom and John Marsh; Victim Advocates Iris Vega and Melissa Milam; Victim Witness Services Coordinator La June Thames; Intelligence Analysts Sharon Johnson, Shannon Alexis, Larry Grasso, William Hamann, Paralegal Specialists Cynthia Muhammad and Kristy Penny; Legal Assistant Charmonique Price; and Litigation Technology Specialists Jeanie Latimore-Brown and William Henderson. Finally, the U.S. Attorney commended the hard work and dedication of Assistant U.S. Attorneys David M. Rubenstein and Karen Rich, who investigated, indicted and prosecuted the case.

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